

**House Study Bill 604 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE \_\_\_\_\_  
BY (PROPOSED COMMITTEE  
ON EDUCATION BILL BY  
CHAIRPERSON WHEELER)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to patriotic exercises and civic and historical  
2 instruction regarding certain holidays in public schools.  
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 256.11, subsections 3 and 4, Code 2024,  
2 are amended to read as follows:

3 3. a. The following areas shall be taught in grades  
4 one through six: English-language arts, social studies,  
5 mathematics, science, health, physical education, traffic  
6 safety, music, visual art, and, subject to [section 279.80](#),  
7 age-appropriate and research-based human growth and  
8 development. Computer science instruction incorporating  
9 the standards established under section 256.7, subsection  
10 26, paragraph "a", subparagraph (4), shall be offered in  
11 at least one grade level commencing with the school year  
12 beginning July 1, 2023. The health curriculum shall include  
13 the characteristics of communicable diseases. The state board  
14 as part of accreditation standards shall adopt curriculum  
15 definitions for implementing the elementary program.

16 b. (1) The social studies curriculum shall include  
17 appropriate patriotic exercises and relevant civic and  
18 historical instruction that conveys to students the meaning and  
19 significance of all of the following days:

20 (a) Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.

21 (b) Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

22 (c) George Washington's birthday.

23 (d) Armed Forces Day.

24 (e) Memorial Day.

25 (f) Constitution Day.

26 (g) Columbus Day.

27 (h) Veterans Day.

28 (i) Thanksgiving Day.

29 (j) Bill of Rights Day.

30 (2) The patriotic exercises and relevant civic and  
31 historical instruction described in subparagraph (1) shall take  
32 place on the day of the holiday, or if that day is not a school  
33 day, then the immediately preceding or following school day or  
34 week.

35 c. Paragraph "b" shall not apply to a nonpublic school.

1     4. a. The following shall be taught in grades seven and  
2 eight: English-language arts; social studies; mathematics;  
3 science; health; age-appropriate and research-based human  
4 growth and development; career exploration and development;  
5 physical education; music; and visual art. Computer science  
6 instruction incorporating the standards established under  
7 section 256.7, subsection 26, paragraph "a", subparagraph (4),  
8 shall be offered in at least one grade level commencing with  
9 the school year beginning July 1, 2023. Career exploration  
10 and development shall be designed so that students are  
11 appropriately prepared to create an individual career  
12 and academic plan pursuant to [section 279.61](#), incorporate  
13 foundational career and technical education concepts aligned  
14 with the six career and technical education service areas as  
15 defined in [subsection 5](#), paragraph "h", incorporate relevant  
16 twenty-first century skills to facilitate career readiness,  
17 and introduce students to career opportunities within the  
18 local community and across this state. The health curriculum  
19 shall include age-appropriate and research-based information  
20 regarding the characteristics of sexually transmitted diseases.  
21 The state board as part of accreditation standards shall adopt  
22 curriculum definitions for implementing the program in grades  
23 seven and eight. However, [this subsection](#) shall not apply to  
24 the teaching of career exploration and development in nonpublic  
25 schools.

26     b. (1) The social studies curriculum shall include  
27 appropriate patriotic exercises and relevant civic and  
28 historical instruction that conveys to students the meaning and  
29 significance of all of the following days:

30     (a) Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.

31     (b) Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

32     (c) George Washington's birthday.

33     (d) Armed Forces Day.

34     (e) Memorial Day.

35     (f) Constitution Day.

1 (g) Columbus Day.

2 (h) Veterans Day.

3 (i) Thanksgiving Day.

4 (j) Bill of Rights Day.

5 (2) The patriotic exercises and relevant civic and  
6 historical instruction described in subparagraph (1) shall take  
7 place on the day of the holiday, or if that day is not a school  
8 day, then the immediately preceding or following school day or  
9 week.

10 c. Paragraph "b" shall not apply to a nonpublic school.

11 Sec. 2. Section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph b, Code  
12 2024, is amended to read as follows:

13 b. Five units of the social studies including instruction  
14 in voting statutes and procedures, voter registration  
15 requirements, the use of paper ballots and voting systems in  
16 the election process, and the method of acquiring and casting  
17 an absentee ballot. All students shall complete a minimum  
18 of one-half unit of United States government and one unit of  
19 United States history.

20 (1) The one-half unit of United States government shall  
21 include the voting procedure as described in this lettered  
22 paragraph and [section 280.9A](#). The government instruction shall  
23 also include a study of the Constitution of the United States  
24 and the Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution and an  
25 assessment of a student's knowledge of the Constitution and the  
26 Bill of Rights.

27 (2) (a) The one unit of United States history shall  
28 include appropriate patriotic exercises and relevant civic and  
29 historical instruction that conveys to students the meaning and  
30 significance of all of the following days:

31 (i) Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.

32 (ii) Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

33 (iii) George Washington's birthday.

34 (iv) Armed Forces Day.

35 (v) Memorial Day.

1 (vi) Constitution Day.

2 (vii) Columbus Day.

3 (viii) Veterans Day.

4 (ix) Thanksgiving Day.

5 (x) Bill of Rights Day.

6 (b) The patriotic exercises and relevant civic and  
7 historical instruction described in subparagraph division (a)  
8 shall take place on the day of the holiday, or if that day is  
9 not a school day, then the immediately preceding or following  
10 school day or week.

11 (3) Subparagraph (2) shall not apply to a nonpublic school.

12 Sec. 3. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, paragraph g, Code  
13 2024, is amended to read as follows:

14 *g.* Be subject to and comply with the requirements of section  
15 256.7, subsection 21, and the educational standards of section  
16 256.11, unless specifically waived by the state board during  
17 the application process; provided, however, that the state  
18 board shall not waive the educational standards related to  
19 social studies instruction established in section 256.11,  
20 subsections 3 and 4, and in section 256.11, subsection 5,  
21 paragraph "b".

22 Sec. 4. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, Code 2024, is amended  
23 by adding the following new paragraph:

24 NEW PARAGRAPH. *p.* Be subject to and comply with the  
25 requirements of section 256.11, subsections 3 and 4, and  
26 section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph "b", relating to  
27 educational standards related to social studies instruction in  
28 the same manner as a school district.

29 Sec. 5. IMPLEMENTATION OF ACT. Section 25B.2, subsection  
30 3, shall not apply to this Act.

31 EXPLANATION

32 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with  
33 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

34 This bill relates to patriotic exercises and civic and  
35 historical instruction regarding certain holidays in public

1 schools.

2 The bill provides that the social studies curriculum  
3 provided to students enrolled in grades 1 through 12 in school  
4 districts, charter schools, and innovation zone schools shall  
5 include appropriate patriotic exercises and relevant civic and  
6 historical instruction that conveys to students the meaning  
7 and significance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday,  
8 Abraham Lincoln's birthday, George Washington's birthday, Armed  
9 Forces Day, Memorial Day, Constitution Day, Columbus Day,  
10 Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Bill of Rights Day. The  
11 bill establishes that the patriotic exercises and relevant  
12 civic and historical instruction shall take place on the day  
13 of the holiday, or if that day is not a school day, then the  
14 immediately preceding or following school day or week.

15 The bill may include a state mandate as defined in Code  
16 section 25B.3. The bill makes inapplicable Code section  
17 25B.2, subsection 3, which would relieve a school district  
18 from complying with a state mandate if funding for the cost of  
19 the state mandate is not provided or specified. Therefore,  
20 school districts are required to comply with any state mandate  
21 included in the bill.